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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY China

SUBJECT Ulan Bator-Peiping Highway

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1. On 10 May 54 there returned to Prague the mission of Czechoslovak engineers and technicians who have been working since 1951 on the strategic road between Ulan Bator in Mongolia and Peiping. The head of the mission was Josef Krulich.

2. The completion of this strategic highway was announced as of 1 May 54, but the Czechoslovak engineers say this completion is more propagandistic than practical. They declare that the better equipped parts of the road in the Gobi Desert permit rapid motor traffic, but the parts of the road in the mountains are still not suitable for trucks. Even cyclists have to walk many miles among the mountains .

3. The Czechoslovak technicians say the construction of the road has been extremely costly, and serious difficulties arose between Soviet and Czechoslovak experts on the one hand and Chinese representatives on the other. The Czechoslovak technicians suspect that the construction of the road was not whole-heartedly supported by Chinese isolationists. Liu Shao-Chi, deputy chairman of the Chinese Government is opposed to the road. 25X1

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